

Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 1-6, 9, 10, 14-16, 18-26 are pending in the application, with claims 1 and 14 being the independent claims. Claims 1 and 14 are sought to be amended. New claim 27 is sought to be added. Support for new claim 27 may be found, for example, at paragraphs [0034]-[0039] of the as filed application. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

Based on the above amendment and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Statement of Substance of Interview

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.133, Applicants provide the following statement of Substance of the Interview. Applicants express their appreciation to Examiner Hoffman for the courtesy of an interview with Applicants' representative on January 22, 2009.

During the interview, differences between the references of record and the claimed invention were discussed. Agreement was reached that key differences exist between the instant application and the references of record.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-6, 9, 10, 14-16 and 18-26 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,694,588 to Ohara et

al. (“Ohara”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,826,352 to Quan (“Quan”). For the reasons set forth below, Applicants respectfully traverse.

Independent claim 1 recites, among other features, “wherein the programmable combinational logic module is configured to adapt to modifications in the copy protection process.” As discussed during the Examiner interview, the combination of Ohara and Quan fails to teach or suggest at least this feature of independent claim 1.

As noted in the background section of the present application, copy protection processes (e.g., MACROVISION) may change over time. Although these copy protection processes are subject to change, they are consistently “implemented in hardware because of the need to quickly process...input signals and generate control signals to adjust an output signal.” (Specification, paragraph [0004]). Therefore, the presently claimed invention advantageously allows revisions to a copy protection process to be incorporated within the otherwise fixed hardware¹ implementation. In other words, the claimed programmable combinational logic module, which supports a copy protection process, “is configured to adapt to modifications in the copy protection process.”

The Office Action concedes that the primary citation to Ohara does not teach supporting a copy protection process. (Office Action, page 3). Since Ohara does not teach supporting a copy protection process, Ohara cannot possibly teach or suggest a programmable combinational logic module that “is configured to adapt to modifications in the copy protection process” as recited in claim 1.

¹ It is readily well known in the relevant art(s) that combinational logic represents a common implementation for hardware designs.

Quan does not cure the deficiencies of Ohara. Quan is directed to a method and apparatus for dynamically changing the copy protection of a video signal. (Quan, col. 5, lines 45-48). Specifically, a copy protection modifier circuit is disclosed in Quan for dynamically modifying “the copy protection depending on a property of the video signal.” (Quan, col. 6, lines 4-8). The copy protection modifier circuit of Quan includes a sensing circuit for measuring a property of the video signal that may be used to dynamically modify the copy protection of the video signal. Figure 4A of Quan illustrates the copy protection modifier circuit of Quan, including the sensing circuit, in further detail.

At most, the copy protection modifier circuit of Quan *changes the copy protection of a video signal*. However, the copy protection modifier circuit, itself, does not “adapt to modifications in the copy protection process” as recited in claim 1.

Accordingly, for at least this reason claim 1 is patentable over Ohara and Quan, alone or in combination.

Furthermore, the combination of Ohara and Quan does not teach or suggest “a plurality of microsequencers coupled to said random access memory that are configured to produce flags based on programs stored in said memory” as recited in claim 1.

On page 3 of the present Office Action, the Examiner cites to col. 4, lines 16-26 and col. 12 lines 36-60 of Ohara as allegedly teaching the aforementioned feature of claim 1. Specifically, it appears the Examiner equates the instruction generator of Ohara, with the plurality of microsequencers recited in claim 1. Even if we assume, for the sake of argument, that the instruction generator of Ohara may be considered equivalent to a single microsequencer, Ohara still fails to disclose the use of a

“plurality of microsequencers coupled to [a] random access memory that are configured to produce flags based on programs stored in said random access memory” as recited in claim 1. Quan does not cure this deficiency of Ohara.

Since neither Ohara nor Quan, alone or in combination, teach or suggest each and every feature of claim 1, the combination of Ohara and Quan cannot render claim 1 unpatentable. Dependent claims 2-6, 9 and 10 are similarly not rendered unpatentable by Ohara and Quan for the same reasons as independent claim 1, from which they depend, and further in view of their own respective features. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 1-6, 9 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Independent claim 14 recites “executing a set of programs from said plurality of programs by a plurality of microsequencers to generate a set of flags” and “wherein the programmable combinational logic module is reconfigured to permit modifications in the copy protection process.” As noted above in regard to claim 1, Ohara does not teach or suggest these features. Quan does not cure the deficiencies of Ohara. Since neither Ohara nor Quan, alone or in combination, teach or suggest each and every feature of claim 14, the combination of Ohara nor Quan cannot render claim 14 unpatentable. Dependent claims 15, 16, and 18-26 are similarly not rendered unpatentable by Ohara nor Quan for the same reasons as independent claim 14, from which they depend, and further in view of their own respective features. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 14-16 and 18-26 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Other Matters

The Examiner has not indicated whether the drawings have been accepted. Applicants assume, absent an indication to the contrary, that the drawings are accepted.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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